

# Amherst Village Strategic Plan – Steering and Outreach Committee Meeting

## MINUTES

Wednesday, January 14, 2015 6:30 – 8:30 pm  
Community Room – SAU 39 – Brick School

**Attendees:** Amy LaPointe, Bruce Berry, Camille Pattison, Chris Buchanan, Gordon Leedy, Jamie Ramsay, Jen Czysz, Ken Miller, Marie Grella, Mike Akillian, Rick Crocker, Steve Yurish, Tori Burke, Al Patnaude, Will Ludt

**Upcoming Meetings:** February 11, 2015 at 6:30 – 8:30 pm; (2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month)  
Community Room – SAU 39 – Brick School

Topic	Notes
<p>Outreach Committee Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Report by committee members on their recent outreach events.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Steve Yurish – Business Owners Need to find the balance between the concerns of the residents and the needs of the business owners. There seems to be a division between the residents of the Village and those outside of the Village. Additional activities that bring residents throughout town to the Village may help bridge this gap. Flooding the common for ice skating could be considered. Should seek additional feedback/clarification on the desire of additional destinations in town.</li><li>Will Ludt, Marie Grella and Craig Fraley – Town Events These folks have developed a comprehensive list of town-wide events by month. Marie Grella has been looking into the issue of bringing the farmer's market back to the Village, but there is little interest from the farmers to come back to the Village. Marie is currently looking for alternative spaces. Suggestions to shift the tree lighting to the same day as other holiday events to boost attendance. Additional activities / events are needed for adults rather than just children. Halloween and the Tree Lighting can be dangerous due to the conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. A winter carnival or an Old Home Days / Village Days event may be successful.</li><li>Tracy Hutchins and Mike Akillian -- Souhegan Chamber - January 13. Flexible zoning would be more helpful to bring businesses or accessory dwellings to the Village. Looking for additional gathering spaces such as Moulton's. Should consider all options in the Village such as the European Model of removing all signage. The trend that realtors are seeing is people moving to Bedford or Hollis rather than Amherst due to the new school in Bedford and lower taxes in both communities. It is more difficult to sell homes in Amherst.</li><li>Colleen Mailloux was meeting was currently meeting with the Conservation Commission.</li></ul>

<p>Outreach Committee Report (continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of future outreach events.</li> </ul>	<p>Future events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School Board – January 27<sup>nd</sup></li> <li>Second Public Input Session at the High School on January 28<sup>th</sup>. Looking for a facilitator – Tori with take notes.</li> <li>Ken Miller house meeting – January 17<sup>th</sup></li> <li>Mike Akillian – January/February</li> </ul> <p>House Events Completed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Al Patnaude</li> <li>Amily Moore</li> <li>Steve Yurish – Village Businesses</li> <li>Liz Larson - Coffee</li> </ul> <p>Survey will close at the end of January.</p>
<p>Traffic Data - <i>Al Patnaude</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Al will provide a brief overview of his traffic data analysis and findings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Al Patnaude has utilized traffic data from the Nashua Regional Planning Commission and completed an in depth preliminary analysis of the data which was shared with the Committee. It will be posted on the website.</li> </ul>
<p>Outreach Findings and Categories – <i>Jen Czysz, NRPC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review draft outreach findings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jen Czysz reviewed the preliminary outreach findings with the group. They were based upon the survey results as of 1/5/15, Patnaude House Party on 10/22/2014, the Public Forum on 12/2/2014, the Moore Coffee on 11/21/2014, the MOMS Club and Preschool input, Steve Yurish’s findings from the Amherst Village Business Owners on 12/2/2014 and Liz Larson’s Coffee on 12/16/14.</li> <li>Main themes included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People love the sense of community, scenic charm and history</li> <li>Enhance, don’t change, the Village</li> <li>Improve walkability</li> <li>Control speed, traffic and noise through law enforcement and police presence</li> </ul> </li> <li>Vision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Village that is alive and thriving</li> <li>Preserve and enhance the Village</li> <li>A destination for visitors</li> <li>Maintain historic, but balance regulation and historic review so to not deter future homebuyers who are essential to maintaining investment in the Village</li> </ul> </li> <li>Data was summarized into the following categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Safety and Traffic</li> <li>Historic Character</li> <li>Community Development</li> <li>Recreation and Events</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p>Organize Working Groups – <i>Mike</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refine issues categories and prioritize actions.</li> <li>• Identity working groups and members.</li> </ul>	<p>A suggested list of working groups, some sample participants (incomplete) and possible charters were distributed for initial discussion, but, given that so many committee members were working elsewhere that night, we agreed to make this the major topic at the February meeting, when we expect a larger attendance..</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Traffic and Safety:</b> (Highway Safety Committee with residents) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic models to manage shared use</li> <li>• Traffic volume (speeds, noise, volume)</li> <li>• Walking (sidewalks), Biking</li> <li>• Signage (reduce traditional signage?)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Historic Character:</b> (HDC, Heritage, residents) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen relationships among HDC and residents</li> <li>• Consider creating a guidelines book</li> <li>• Educational effort to convey role and authority of HDC</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Recreation, Events and Attractions:</b> (Recreation, residents, event leader representatives) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Envision a system of events, venues, parks and paths that provide residents of all ages easier, multiple modes of access to the Village and surrounding attractions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Community Development:</b> (Community Development, Planning, residents) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore ways to balance appropriate business development while maintaining neighborhood character.</li> <li>• Identify candidate zoning changes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Lighting/Utilities:</b> (DPW, HDC, architectural lighting team, residents) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess suitability and status of current operational lighting.</li> <li>• Explore trial of architectural lighting to showcase the Village at night.</li> <li>• Explore the cost and implications of burying utilities underground.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Project Schedule – <i>Mike</i></p> <p>Review the schedule for the remaining tasks.</p>	<p>Scheduling discussion led to the following proposed schedule: working groups meet in February and March and collaborate on findings and recommended actions in April at a half day work session with all Committee members. One public event will be held in (early?) May for community feedback, and the final action plan will be amended, as appropriate in May and presented to the Board of Selectmen in June.</p>
<p><b>Follow Up Items</b></p>	
<p><b>All Committee Members:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to distribute information about the project; host or coordinate a house event; obtain input at a committee meeting; distribute postcards and project flyers; encourage completion of the electronic survey.</li> <li>2. Think about the proposed working groups, their composition, and their corresponding tasks for refinement at the February meeting.</li> </ol>	